

WASTE MINIMISATION REVIEW GROUP

FINAL REPORT

Introduction

1. This is the final report of the Waste Minimisation Review Group, established by the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee in order to investigate ways of reducing and reusing waste across the Borough.

Background Information

2. At the meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee held on at its meeting held on 24th April, 2008, it was agreed that a Review Group be established to investigate ways of reducing and reusing waste across the Borough.
3. A wide number of issues have been considered and discussed at the meetings and this report describes the outcome of the Review Group, summarises the work undertaken, the findings from the processes and the subsequent recommendations.

Terms of Reference

4. The following terms of reference had been established for the Review Group :-
 - a. To examine ways reducing wastage within the Borough of Darlington.
 - b. To consider the problems that exist and investigate possible solutions.
 - c. To give consideration to Best Practice in relation to Waste Minimisation.
 - d. To monitor any recommendations arising from this Review.

Membership of the Review Group

5. The membership of the Waste Minimisation Review Group comprised all Member of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Acknowledgements

6. The Review Group acknowledges the support and assistance provided in the course of their investigations and would like to place on record their thanks to the following :-

Phillippa Scrafton, Waste Minimisation and Recycling Officer.
Brian Graham, Head of Street Scene.
Karen Graves, Democratic Support Officer.

Aim

7. The overall aim of the Review Group was to consider what action could be taken to improve the Darlington Borough Council's amount of waste and it was agreed to focus on Reduce and Reuse waste.

Methods of Investigation

8. The Review Group have met formally four times between 26th June, 2008 and 27th November, 2008 and a detailed record of the topics discussed at those meetings are contained in the notes produced following each meeting. Interested Parties and outside bodies including Friends of the Earth, ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns) and Darlington Partnership were invited to attend the meeting held on 8th October, 2008 in order to hear their views on Waste Minimisation. Members also attended the Annual General Meeting of the Traders Association Meeting held on Monday, 26th January, 2009 at which Phillippa gave a presentation to highlight what could be done in order to reduce trade waste.

Financial Implications

9. The recommendations contain a number of recommendations that have a financial consequence. The Review Group recognises that the Council currently has limited resources and these spending aspirations will need to be viewed within the overall competing priorities and service delivery pressures throughout the Council.

Conclusions

10. The Group concluded that :-
 - (a). The Review Group acknowledges the excellent work that has already been undertaken by the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Officer.
 - (b). The Review Group recognizes that there are currently budget constraints on the whole of the Council that could impact on some of its findings.
 - (c). The Review Group acknowledged that the Waste Management Contract awarded to Stonegrave Aggregates during 2008 influenced the way forward and stated it was the aim of the Group to influence the public and business behaviour towards minimisation of waste, the key being to find a technique and approach that would work.
 - (d). The Review Group acknowledged that most Darlington Supermarkets had a Green Policy in place and that there was a National Drive to encourage supermarkets to reduce the use of plastic carrier bags and packaging around its goods.
 - (e). As the Town Crier was distributed to every household in Darlington it could be a useful form of communication to alert residents to the Waste Minimisation Campaign currently being undertaken the Council.

- (f). The Review Group considers that it has made an effective contribution to examining issues and problems surrounding the need to minimise waste within the Borough of Darlington.

Recommendations

11. It is recommended that :-

- (a) The Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee endorse the findings and recommendations of the Waste Minimisation Review Group.
- (b) Every opportunity be explored to ensure the public are made aware of the Council's current Waste Minimisation Campaign entitled Making Waste Work, which focused on the three R's – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle in that order.
- (c) Every effort be made to encourage supermarkets to use less packaging on goods and to encourage the use of re-useable carrier bags.
- (d) Businesses and trade associations be made aware of the cardboard collection scheme currently run by the Council.
- (e) In order to avoid food waste the message, 'shop often, shop local and buy local' be widely publicised across the Borough.
- (f) The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee continue to encourage schools to educate children in food economy.
- (g) Borough Council employees and Members be expected to reduce paper usage and recycle waste as much as possible.
- (h) The work currently undertaken by the Green Champions Campaign continue to be supported by the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee.
- (i) The Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee continue to monitor Waste Minimisation in the Borough of Darlington.

Waste Minimisation Review Group